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ABSTRACT

Many factors influence the development and socialization of American adolescents including peers, schools, family, and the community. This paper examines how the relationship of extracurricular participation influences academic growth. To determine if selected personal and academic variables during high school currently affect college academic performance, 292 college students participated in the study. The degree of participation in extracurricular activities was assessed using a self-report questionnaire designed to provide responses about the students' academic and extracurricular experience during high school years. Participation was also broken down into separate areas of sports, music, dance, theater, and other activities. Data were collected on social, academic recognition, and affiliation as well. Analyzed data compared academic grade point average, educational aspirations, and various social supports that influence academic performance. Additionally, based on information gathered, recommendations are offered for future research, as well as discussion of benefits and limitations of the study. Contains 10 graphs and 30 references. (Author)

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HIGH SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & COLLEGE GRADES

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Abstract

Many factors influence the development and socialization of American adolescents including peers, schools, family, and the community. This paper examines how the relationship of extracurricular participation influences academic growth. To determine if selected personal and academic variables during high school currently effect college academic performance, two-hundred ninety-two college students participated in the study. The degree of participation in extracurricular activities was assessed using a self-report questionnaire designed to provide responses about the students' academic and extracurricular experience during high school years. Participation was also broken down into separate areas of sports, music, dance, theater, and other activities. Data were collected on social, academic recognition, and affiliation as well. Analyzed data compared academic grade point average, educational aspirations, and various social supports that influences academic performance. Additionally, based on information gathered, recommendations are offered for future research, as well as discussion of benefits and limitations of the study.

High School Extracurricular Activities And College Grades

The development and socialization of the adolescent include many factors. Family and peers may provide dominant influences to the socialization and development of the adolescent, yet the experiences and opportunities provided by secondary schools also influence adolescent development. Direct interaction with the academic curriculum in schools, such as the degree of success or failure in various subject matters and the degree of encouragement provided for academic effort, influence self-growth, educational aspirations, and values of adolescents (Holland & Andre, 1987). It is the relationship between extracurricular activities and the academic growth of students that is the focus of this study.

Examination of the effects of extracurricular activities is especially important in an era of limited financial resources for schools. For many years the perceptions and accountability in school programs have been the topic of considerable debate due to inflation and tightened budgets. The last decade has brought a new emphasis on academic achievement. As a result, educators and the public have looked critically at the activity programs offered in secondary schools. Some programs have been eliminated to use resources elsewhere. Critical review and decision making on programs have been made on financial grounds. The program effects of adolescent development have been structured and developed by empirically based knowledge. The research literature is diverse. Holland and Andre (1987) provide an overview of the empirical findings

on extracurricular participation. Such a review can help inform policy makers and lend direction for future research. In their view (Holland & Andre, 1987), extracurricular participation among youth contributes to academic growth and is a beneficial opportunity and strength. Positive support systems and encouragement are gained by participating in extracurricular activities and influence adolescent development. According to Fejgin (1994) students who are more involved in high school competitive sports have higher grades, a higher self-concept, higher educational aspirations, a more internal locus of control and fewer discipline problems. A decline in public support for athletics, as well as other extracurricular activity, is occurring widespread throughout our society with leading policy makers embracing the "back to basics" philosophy. Extracurricular programs are vulnerable to future budget cutbacks. It is important, therefore, to explore the issue of these activities and the inherent value of participation to student development as well as social role-models and support influences that contribute to students' moral character.

Background Literature

The relationship between athletic involvement and academics has been the topic of considerable debate for many years (Braddock, 1981). Those opposed to interscholastic athletics claim that participation in athletics exerts a detrimental impact on scholarship because it diverts an excessive amount of both human and financial capitals away from the primary objectives of the schools (Gordon, 1957). Supporters on the other hand contend that athletic participation

has a beneficial impact of academic achievement (Otto, 1975; Picou, 1978; Rehberg & Schafer, 1968). It is assumed that extracurricular activity (including athletics) functions as grades received in the academic curriculum by providing opportunities to acquire, develop, and rehearse attitudes and skills from which status goals evolve and upon which future success is grounded (Otto, 1975).

The social significance of high school sports has been approached in research by many positions. Developmental theory emphasizes the "socializing" or "character building" effects of athletic participation (Rees, Howell, & Miracle, 1990; Spady, 1970). The Zero-sum theory is concerned with athletic participation diverting attention from academic work (Coleman, 1961). He views the adolescent society as a finite system in which commitment to academic, athletic, or social value represents a loss to the other two. Others (Rehberg & Schafer 1968; Spady 1971) argue that the two student cultures are causally linked and that athletics positively effects grades. Several reviews of empirical studies of the effects of sports participation (Holland & Andre 1987; Marsh 1993; Otto, 1982) reported that the most commonly studied outcomes were academic achievement, educational and occupational aspirations and attainments, self-concept, and popularity. For example, Otto and Alwin (1977) found that sports participation of male students in the senior year of high school was positively related to educational and occupational aspirations, after controlling for socioeconomic status (SES), IQ, and school grades. In a prior study, Otto (1982) reported that

sports participation in high school positively effected educational attainment, occupational status, and income 15 years later.

Another area of concern found in the literature is whether student athletes' grade point average (GPA) are lower than the grades of students who do not participate in sports. Evidence from several sources supports the expectation that participation in interscholastic sports and academic achievement is related. Sports participation in high school is positively related to some school-related behaviors that enhance individual academic success (Fejgin, 1994; Marsh, 1993; Otto & Alwin, 1977). However, the expectations are far from consistent. On one hand, the unfortunate popular stereotype of the typical athlete as a "dumb jock" persists (Soltz, 1994). In addition some empirical data indicate that participation in athletics is indeed related to low academic achievements (Landers, Felitz, Obermeier, & Brouse 1978). On the other hand, however, a number of studies have reported that athletes not only attain higher GPA's than other students, but that their educational aspirations, self-concepts, and other effective characteristics are enhanced by participation (Hanks & Eckland 1976; Otto & Alwin, 1977; Rehberg & Schafer, 1968; Spreitzer & Pugh, 1973).

In a recent study (Soltz, 1994) evidence indicates that participation in interscholastic athletics does not depress student athletes' GPA's below the average of their non participating peers. Students competing in athletics maintain significantly higher grades than those not involved in competitive sports. The literature provides a number of encouraging findings that may further support the

value athletics provide for academic excellence. Hanks (1979) found that participation in athletics facilitates the formation of educational goals and enhances prospects for attending college. In a recent study (Smith, 1994) examining the effects of interscholastic athletic participation on high school variables, it was found that athletic participation had a strong significant direct effect on grades and citizenship. This would indicate that grades, the strongest predictor of high school graduation, and citizenship, another important predictor of high school graduation, are both functions of participation in athletic programs.

Holland and Andre (1987) found that participation in co-curricular activities, particularly athletics, is related to aspirations and attainment. This appears to be especially true for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. However, Rehberg and Schafer (1968) reported no relationship between participation and GPA in a sample of high school males. Similarly, in a mixed sample of males and females, Spreitzer and Pugh (1973) failed to find a significant relationship between GPA and athletic involvement. Perhaps no area of sport sociology has provoked more journalistic concern or more research than the topic of sports participation and academic achievement. Snyder and Spreitzer (1990) conducted a study involving Black, Hispanic, and Caucasian males. They looked at the relationship between athletic participation and academic achievement. As part of this study, they reviewed earlier landmark studies that indicated that the grades of athletes were consistently better than those of non-athletes.

The study findings of Snyder and Spreitzer (1990) support the earlier finding and demonstrate a positive relationship between high school athletic participation and academic achievement. The prevailing model, supported by these finding, is that the athletic role enhances the academic role. Durbin (1984) says national surveys show that participants in high school co-curricular activities attain better grades than when they did not participate. In his view athletic participation in high school is a valuable educational experience. Students' academic objectives are much more than many educators realize. Participation helps develop basic values such as self-respect, self-esteem, self-confidence, and competitive spirit; further, the participant learns the value of teamwork and experiences how to win and how to lose. These intangibles certainly are educational experiences and as important in a student's total preparation for being a productive citizen in later life as grades earned in the academic classroom.

Smith (1994) found that high school athletes were considerably less involved in school-related deviance, non-school related deviance, drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse, and serious offenses with the law. However, in a related review of the literature, Donnelley (1981) found that athletes and juvenile delinquents are similar in terms of body type, birth order, and stimulus seeking behavior. To explore the issues of athletics and inherent value of participation to student development, sports participation and academic achievement were studied by Smith (1994). The study indicates that an expanded program of

interscholastic athletics would decrease school discipline problems, high school graduation rates would rise, and self-esteem and educational aspirations would become more readily apparent.

Almost every student in American education has experienced co-curricular or extracurricular activities as either a spectator or participant. Yet, outside of athletic participation, research on the effects of participation in school activities is scant. History says that student participation in such activities as band, choir, and orchestra have a positive effect on everything from academic achievement to self-discipline and from citizenship to personal hygiene (Morrison, 1994). Addressing the relationship between music and academic achievement Earhart (1920) argued that music enhances knowledge in the areas of mathematics, science, geography, history, foreign language, physical education, and vocational training. Recent emphasis on interdisciplinary study, along with the uncertain future of many school subjects, has provoked renewed interest in cross-cultural research. In addition Morrison (1994) concludes that values of artistic accomplishment and understanding and carefully planned experiences in the arts result in unique and positive influence on critical aspects of intellectual and social development.

Excellence in music education and excellence in academics go hand in hand, and the quality experiences the arts disciplines can provide effect positive changes in the schools (Straub, 1994). As we work to improve the quality of education for all children, the arts must be recognized as a vital part of our

efforts. The arts provide valuable opportunities for understanding our cultural heritage and that of all our civilizations. The arts also enhance our nation's economic competitiveness by developing creative problem solving skills.

According to Straub (1994) it is through participation in the music program, students gain a sense of discipline, self-esteem, and pride of accomplishment. They excel in teamwork, cooperation, problem solving, leadership, and creative thinking. They develop the capacity to enrich their human existence. Students need to experience success. Students are staying in school, and academic achievement has improved. The spirit of school has become positive. Furthermore, arts disciplines have the potential to effect positive change in America's schools and ultimately that the positive change will be in the quality of life in our nation.

Lehman (1988) suggests that music is one of the basics and that its importance is relative to all the other demands that are made in school. The consensus is that music and other arts are extremely important in education and should have a high priority. He argues that music is not valued high enough and it is a question of priorities in schools, especially when music is deleted from curriculums due to time limits or activities not being offered because of budget reductions. It is essential that every student succeed in something. For some students music can make school tolerable. Only in music can their talents be appreciated, contributions respected, and their achievements valued. Music has

proved itself repeatedly to be a superb means of preventing dropouts (Lehman, 1988).

A recent article (Grover, 1994) discusses how theater participation aids the student in these areas: self-expression, self-development, self-understanding, self-esteem, self-discipline, human understanding, and competition. Participation in theater activities also allows students to develop analytical skills which impact mental development that goes beyond what occurs in the typical classroom. Other examples of positive effects of performing arts education on students at the secondary level include a recent review by Wright (1994) which suggest that performing arts teach young people discipline and perseverance. They give students a sense of self-respect and teach the value of cooperation where students learn that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well. Inclusion and integration of arts activities into the curriculum offer strategies for student motivation and success. The success potential of many students, particularly those considered to be at risk, can be enhanced and aided by course offerings in the performing and visual arts. It is the responsibility of our schools to prepare students for life, and to that end the performing arts teach invaluable lessons (Wright, 1994).

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationship between participation and involvement in school activities on several student outcomes. The effect of athletic participation is also compared to that of participation in other extracurricular activities; such as academic clubs, music,

drama, student government, and other hobby clubs, as well as the possible differences due to encouragement and social support from mentors, role models and significant others. Since previous research has concentrated on the benefits of athletics to the exclusions of other types of school activities, a secondary purpose was to assess the relationship between participation and non participation of specific school activities; in particularly music-related activities such as band, chorus, dance and theater. Both music and athletics involve the student in numerous practice sessions, some group travel or group competition, and more intense relationship with a faculty sponsor, coach, or music director, than do other kinds of school activities. The expectation was that participation in music activities would equal athletic participation in terms of a positive influence on adolescent self-esteem and that participation in any type of school activities would be related to higher self-esteem than no participation. Other assessed variables that are interrelated with school setting and activities include comparison of current college grade point average with high school grade point average.

Method

Sample

The data reported in this paper were collected by means of an anonymous, voluntary, self-administered questionnaire. The present responses from the questionnaire were obtained with permission by a signed consent form from college students in a public regional university in spring 1995. The university is

located near a large metropolitan area in the mid-south. The 292 participants included 172 females at 59% and 120 males at 41%. The school draws from a predominantly white middle-class population. The sample population was largely Caucasian at 82.9%, with 12.7% African American, 1.4% Hispanic, 1% Asian American and 2% students did not indicate ethnicity.

Measures

The degree of participation in extracurricular activities was assessed using a self-report questionnaire. The questionnaires contain a wide array of information designed to provide responses about the students academic and extracurricular experience during their high school years. Participation was also broken down into separate areas: Sports, music, dance, theater and other activities compared with non participation. Data were collected and measured with independent variables such as gender, ethnicity, parents' education level, family structure, and family income. Extracurricular participation is measured by categories of sports participation, music participation, theater/dance participation, as well as data gathered on social, academic recognition, and affiliation.

Encouragement, support, and influence on academic and social development are measured by students' responses on dependent variables of significant role-models and mentors including family, peers, teachers, neighbors, church members and co-workers. Other dependent variables that were used included student measures on grades in selected areas such as English, Math, and Science. High school and current college GPA's were compared for

extracurricular participants and non participants. Educational aspiration and attainment, discipline problems and part-time work were also dependent variables in this study.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using chi-square to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables. In order to examine relationships between background variables and sport participation, some cross-tabulations were presented first to demonstrate rates of participation of various groups with various sports. Cross-tabulations were also conducted to demonstrate comparisons with other extracurricular activities and participants as well as differences between gender, SES, academic grade point average, educational aspirations, and various social supports and role models that influence adolescent development and encourage academic growth.

Results

Two hundred ninety-two college students participated in this study; 172 female participants (58.9%) and 120 male participants (41.1%). The majority age of the total group (78%) was between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five.

In regard to the cultural background, the sample population was largely Caucasian at 82.9%, with 12.7% African American, 1.4% Hispanic, 1% Asian American and 2% students did not indicate ethnicity. Findings indicate 45% of the students were seniors, 25% juniors, 13% sophomores, 14% freshman, and the minority (3.0%) graduate students. Thirty-three percent of participants'

major of study was in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, with 23 % in the College of Education, 19% in the College of Liberal Arts, 15% in the College of Business, and 10% in the College of Mass Communication. Seventy-five percent of the total sample came from two parent homes while 17% came from single parent homes. Eight percent reported they lived with grandparents, other family members, or foster family. The largest number of participants (38%) reported their family income to be over $45,000. Fifteen percent of the participants' family income ranged from $28,001 to $45,000, 24% ranged from $18,001 to $28,000, 13% ranged from $7,001 to $18,000, and 10% were less than $7,000. The birth order of family members in the total sample consisted of 12% indicating only child, 30% as the oldest, 9% as the second child, 18% as the middle child, and 31% as the youngest. According to this college sample, the birth order of oldest and youngest child was reported most frequent. Further, the total sample reporting a GPA of 3.0 or better during high school was 61.1%. The current GPA's of this same sample indicate 42.5% maintain a 3.0 or better. (see Appendix A) The students involved in extracurricular activities during high school indicate that 58.2% report involvement of one or more sports. Thirty-eight percent were involved in music activities such as band or choir. Twenty-seven percent of the total sample indicate involvement in dance or theater.

The data findings for sports participants indicate that 42% report a family income during the high school years of over $45,000, X^2 (8, N =290) = 20.8, p = .00. Family birth order for sports participants report oldest child at 31%, 22%

middle child, 26% as youngest child, 11% as second child, and the lowest at 10% as only child, X^2 (6, N = 291) = 17, p = .03. Sixty-eight percent of the dance or theater participants maintained a high school GPA of 3.0 or better, X^2 (8, N =292) = 75, p = .04, and 44.3% attain a current college GPA of 3.0 or better, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 73, p = .00. Science grades for sports, music, and total sample participants were X^2 (6, N = 291) = 49, p = .00, X^2 (6, N = 290) = 60, p = .00, and X^2 (12, N = 292) = 123, p = .00, respectively.

Results indicate 68% of music participants were female, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 6.6, p = .04. Dance and theater participants consisted of 71% female and 29% male, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 7.6, p = .02. Female participants in the total sample indicate a greater significance of involvement than male participants in hobby clubs, such as photography, school paper, or student council, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 9.0, p = .01, and in academic clubs, such as the debate team, X^2 (1, N = 292) = 5.0, p = .02. Other gender differences include participation in academic honors and social recognition by females, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 11, p.= .00. It was also reported that females received higher grades in English, X^2 (3, N = 292) = 19.3, p = .00. Female participants were less likely during high school to have discipline problems, X^2 (2, N = 291) = 36, p = .00 and were less likely to be suspended, X^2 (1, N = 291) = 17, p = .00. Participants involved in sports and music activities were also less likely to have discipline problems and suspension, X^2 (2, N = 291) = 6.8, p = .03 and X^2 (2, N = 292) = 8.4, p = .01, respectively.

Participants with GPA's of 3.0 or better were less likely to have discipline problems in high school, X^2 (8, N = 290) = 91, p = .00, and less likely to be suspended, X^2 (4, N = 290) = 41, p = .00. Participants with GPA's of 3.0 or greater indicate significant involvement in high school academic clubs, X^2 (4, N = 291) = 52, p = .00, hobby clubs, X^2 (8, N = 291) = 18, p = .02, as well as receiving academic honors and social recognition, X^2 (8, N = 291) = 845, p = .00 and X^2 (8, N = 291) = 78, p = .00, respectively. GPA's of 3.0 or greater were significant in data indicating participants' attainment of A's and B's in the subjects of Math, X^2 (12, N = 291) = 92, p = .00, Science, X^2 (12, N = 291) = 28, p = .00, and English, X^2 (12, N = 291) = 106, p = .00. Participants with GPA's of 3.0 or greater also indicate having a mentor in high school, X^2 (12, N = 290) = 28, p = .00.

Data were collected on the participants' social and support systems, particularly environmental factors that influence adolescent development such as who encouraged, supported, and motivated them. Findings indicate that influence was provided to the participants from various role models, mentors, peers, teachers, family, and other activities, such as involvement in church, part-time jobs, and social functions. Participants responded in likert style, ranging from "always" to "never" to questions such as "Did you receive support and encouragement from your teachers during high school?" They also responded to other sets of questions that ranged from "definitely true" to "definitely not true" such as, "Most of my teachers in high school were interested in me." Results

from the total sample surveyed, answered by responding "Always" or "Mostly" to the following questions:

1. "Did you receive support and encouragement from your family during high school?" (81.8%)
2. "Did you receive support and encouragement from your friends and peers during high school?" (65%)
3. "Did you receive support and encouragement from teachers?" (68.5%), church members and neighbors (64.8%), or co-workers?" (46.7%)
4. "Did you have a mentor during high school years?" (83%)

Participants in this study also responded to the following statements as "True" or "Definitely True." Results indicate the following:

1. "Team sports are an excellent way to build character." (74.6%)
2. "The support and influence from others outside my family had a great impact on my moral character." (72.5%)
3. "I always had a desire to attend college." (89.4%)
4. "I was motivated to succeed in my academics." (83.2%)
5. "I believe that being involved in extracurricular activities enhanced my motivation to learn and do well in school." (67%)
6. "A person's experiences in life determine what they become." (75.6%)
7. "During high school I really felt like part of the school." (67%)

When results were compared between participants involved in sports, music, theater, and hobby club with the total sample, findings indicate sports participants

were more likely to have a mentor (99%), X^2 (6, N = 291) = 73, p .00. As expected, sports participants indicate a significant increase over the total sample indicating "Definitely True" or "True" to the following statements:

1. "Team sports are an excellent way to build character," X^2 (8, N = 291) = 70, p = .00.
2. "I always had a desire to attend college," X^2 (8, N = 292) = 30, p =.00.
3. "During high school, I really felt like a part of the school," X^2 (8, N = 292) = 50.7, p = .00.
4. "I believe that being involved in extracurricular activities enhanced my motivation to learn and do well in school," X^2 (8, N = 292) = 49, p = .00.
5. "Most of my teachers in high school were interested in me," X^2 (8, N = 292) = 65, p = .00.
6. " A persons experience in life determines what they become," X^2 (8, N = 291) = 48, p = .00.

Sports participants indicated that their high school encouraged participation in athletics and extracurricular activities, X^2 (6, N = 292) = 314, p = .00, and they received social recognition, X^2 (4, N = 15, p = .00, by attending activities such as football games, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 23, p = .00, junior/senior prom, X^2 2, N = 292) = 16, p = .00, and by having a steady boyfriend or girlfriend during high school, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 65, p = .02. Sports participants received encouragement and support from teachers, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 73, p = .00, friends, X^2 (8, N = 292) =

110, p = .00, co-workers, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 23, p = .00, and from church members and neighbors, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 20, p = .00.

Music participants also indicated that their high school encouraged extracurricular activities and athletics, X^2 (6, N = 291) = 294, p = .00. Social recognition were significant to music participants in this study, X^2 (4, N = 291) = 11, p = .02. Music participants also attended football games, X^2 (2, N = 291) = 8.1, p = .01, church activities, X^2 (2, N = 291) = 15, p = .00, and received support from peers, X^2 (8, N = 291) = 101, p = .00 and teachers, X^2 (8, N = 291) = 59, p = .00. Participants involved in music activities reported having mentors during high school years, X^2 (6, N = 291) = 78, p = .00 and X^2 (6, N = 290) = 75, p = .00, respectively. Agreement to the following questions by music participants were significant:

1. "Most of my teachers were interested in me," X^2 (8, N = 291) = 61, p =.00.
2. "I always had a desire to attend college," X^2 (8, N = 291) = 33. p = .00.
3. "A persons experiences in life determine what they become," X^2 (8, N = 290) = 57, p =.00.

Theater and dance participants responded "Definitely True" or "True" to the following statement: "My friends think it is important to do well in school," X^2 (6, N = 292) = 7.6, p = .02.

Data were also significant for participants involved in hobby clubs during high school. Hobby club participants maintained GPA's of 3.0 or greater, X^2 (2, N = 291) = 17.5, p = .02. They were involved in academic clubs, X^2 (2, N = 292) =

35, p = .00 and received academic honors, X^2 (4, N = 292) = 18, p = .00. Hobby club participants were supported by their teachers, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 22, p = .00, co-workers, X^2 (4, N = 292) = 24, p = .01, and by church members and neighbors, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 24, p = .00. They also received social recognition, X^2 (4, N = 292) = 35, p = .00. They attended football games, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 9, p = .01 and their high school prom, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 13, p = .00. Results indicate they were also involved in church activities, X^2 (2, N = 292) = 13, p = .00. Hobby club participants also indicate a desire to attend college, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 21, p = 01, and considered their high school teachers were interested in them, X^2 (8, N = 292) = 25, p = .00.

Participants with high school GPA's of 3.0 or greater were motivated to succeed in their academics, X^2 (16, N = 291) = 109, p = .00, had a desire to attend college, X^2 (16, N = 291) = 80, p =.00, and believed that being involved in extracurricular activities enhanced their motivation to learn and do well in school, X^2 (16, N = 291) = 43, p = .00. They were supported by teachers, X^2 (16, N = 291) = 30, p = .01, attended football games, X^2 (4, N = 291) = 10, p = .03, and felt like a part of their school, X^2 (16, N = 291) = 31, p = .01.

Discussion

Apparently participation in extracurricular activities enhances both the intellectual and the social development of students. This study investigated the relationship between participation and involvement in school activities on several student outcomes. The effects of athletic participation is compared to that of

participation in other extracurricular activities; such as academic clubs, music, theater, dance, student government, and other hobby clubs, as well as the possible differences due to encouragement and social support from mentors, role models and significant others. A secondary purpose was to assess the relationship between participation and non participation of specific school activities; music-related activities such as band, chorus, dance and theater. The value of participation in extracurricular programs contributes to adolescent development and is apparently successful in the prediction of academic growth, just as past research suggests. In this study, findings indicate that participation in extracurricular activities provide the student with opportunities that enhance social development and influences academic performance.

Female participants in the total sample indicate a greater involvement than male participants in hobby clubs, academic clubs, sports, music, dance and theater activities. Females were rewarded more by social recognition and academic honor. Females earned better grades of 3.0 or greater, received higher grades in English, and were less likely to have discipline problems. Participation in sports, music and theater activities does not seem to hinder grades in high school or college academic performance. In fact, participants involved in theater and dance activities appear to receive outstanding academic achievement and success. Theater and music participants also received social recognition in high school and were influenced by teachers and peers. Encouragement and motivation to succeed in academics were evident in this study by the many

outside activities away from school, such as church, neighbors, friends, and co-workers if involved in part-time employment. Theater and dance participants received encouragement to do well in school by their friends and they were considered supportive of their school and academic activities. Sports participants were more likely to come from two-parent homes and received encouragement from their families. However, they also received social recognition in high school and were influenced greatly by teachers and peers. Although the majority of the total sample came from two-parent families, school and outside support and influence could contribute to the academic success of participants from single-parent families. Sports, hobby clubs, music, dance and theater participation in high school had influence on participants' desire to go to college and appears to have contributed to the many positive factors that can influence adolescents' social development, academic success, and college attainment.

This study seems to agree with past research. Wright (1994) suggest that performing arts teach young people discipline and perseverance, giving them a sense of accomplishment and strong self-esteem. According to Grover (1994), participation in theater aids the student in these areas: self-expression, self-development, self-understanding, self-esteem, analytical skills, self-esteem, human understanding, and competition. Comparing the theater participants in this study, even though a minority population, this writer would agree.

Extracurricular participation among youth contributes to academic growth, as well as the positive effects of encouragement from social and support systems

that are gained by extracurricular activities. Whatever the explanations, it appears that participation in high school extracurricular activities provide some kinds of positive experiences that enhance student academic success and the basic value of achievement. Discipline problems are less in students who participated in extracurricular activities. When students are involved, discipline problems drop, academic achievement of participating students increases, and out of school problems decrease dramatically. One can only conclude that there is a positive link between academic achievement and involvement in activities beyond the school day (Smith, 1994).

This study examined adolescent values to determine their relationship to social participation in school, their relationship to educational attainment and desire, and the extent of their continuation into adulthood. In addition, the study focused on adolescent social participation in high school and its association with later educational attainment. The present study also has its limitations. The self-report survey constructed by this writer could be modified to measure more aspects of the total samples' current academic achievement. Current grade point averages were assessed, however, to indicate specific academic success in regard to specific curricula, and the effects of college extracurricular activities on students' self-esteem and social support systems data should have been more extensive.

If extracurricular participation is to have an impact on the study of adolescent development or on educational practice, future research is needed. A

sensible theory of extracurricular participation is needed to guide future studies in the area. One way is to be more attentive to the influence processes rather than focusing simply on participation outcomes. Examining influences and outcomes within categories of activities, and categories of participants and non-participants, could place extracurricular influences within the larger context of the several socialization agents students encounter within and beyond school. Finally, researchers must begin to examine extracurricular activities within the context of the many other individuals or institutions that influence secondary students' lives. According to Brown (1988), as socialization agents extracurricular activities must compete with concerns over peer status, the pressures and priorities of friends, parental expectations, encouragement from teachers, and so on. The tendencies of other studies have been to control these factors, but it would seem the wiser approach is to measure how extracurricular influences processes, interact with, complement, overcome, and undermine these other major sources of influence. Researchers could simply compare participants' and nonparticipants' scores on some variable, and concentrate on how extracurricular participation enhances or impedes specified outcomes. The emphasis on process is critical because it will help educators to design or restructure extracurricular programs to be a truly effective part of the secondary program.

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Figure 1: Total Sample: 292
Female: 172 (58.9%)
Male: 120 (41.1%)

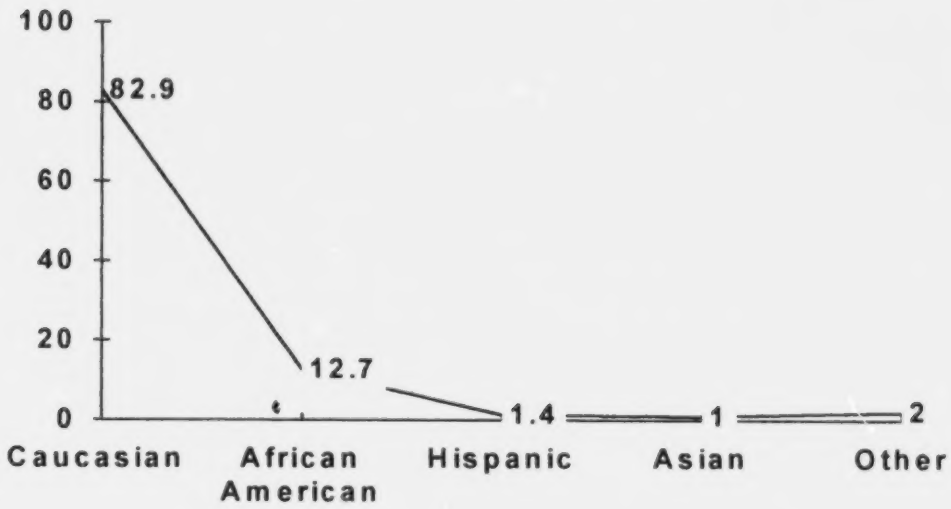

Figure 2: Age of Participants

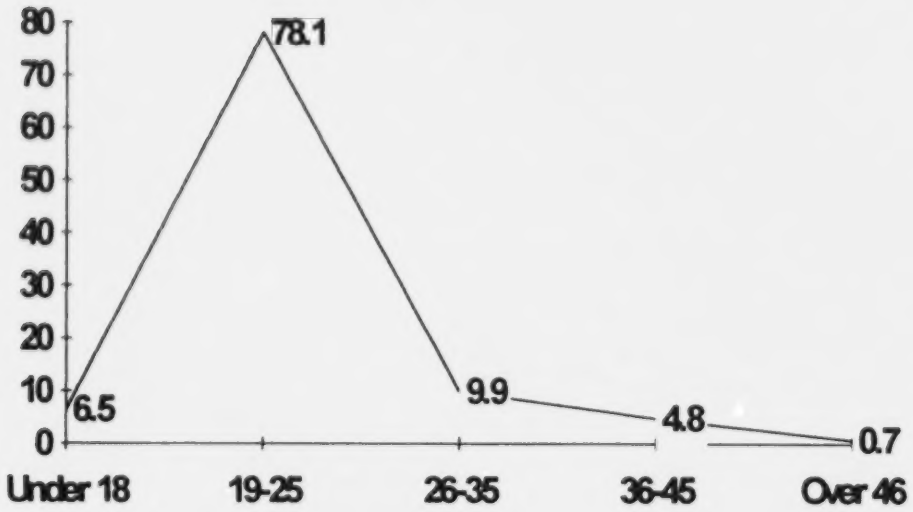

Figure 3: School College of Major

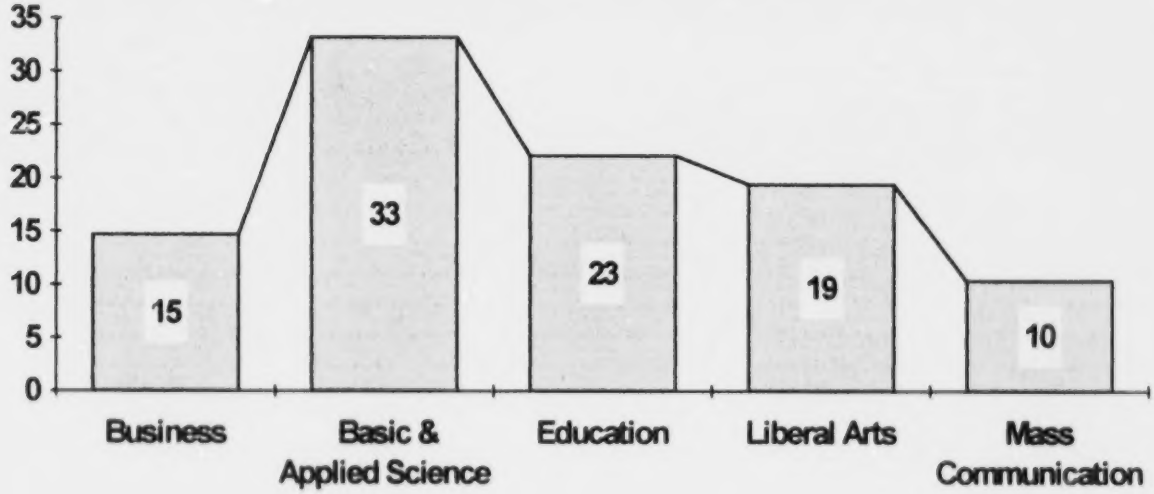

Figure 4: Percentage of Educational Classification of Total Sample

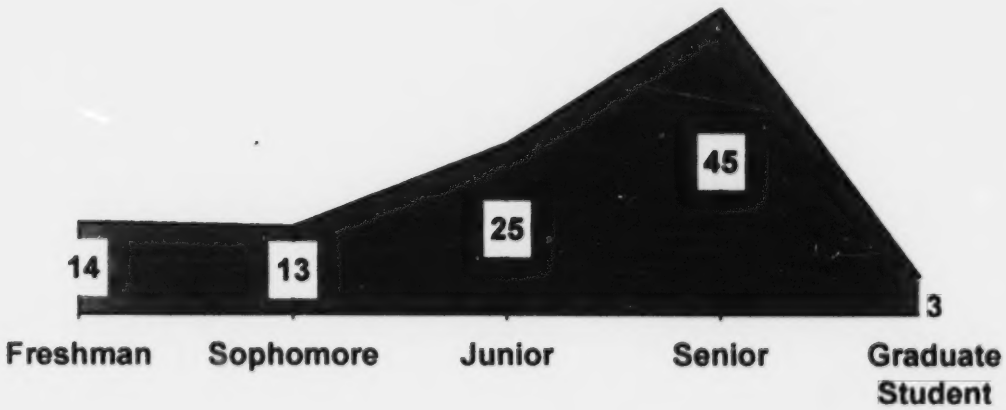

Figure 5: Comparison of Family Income Distribution of Total Sample, Sports, Music, and Theater/Dance Participants

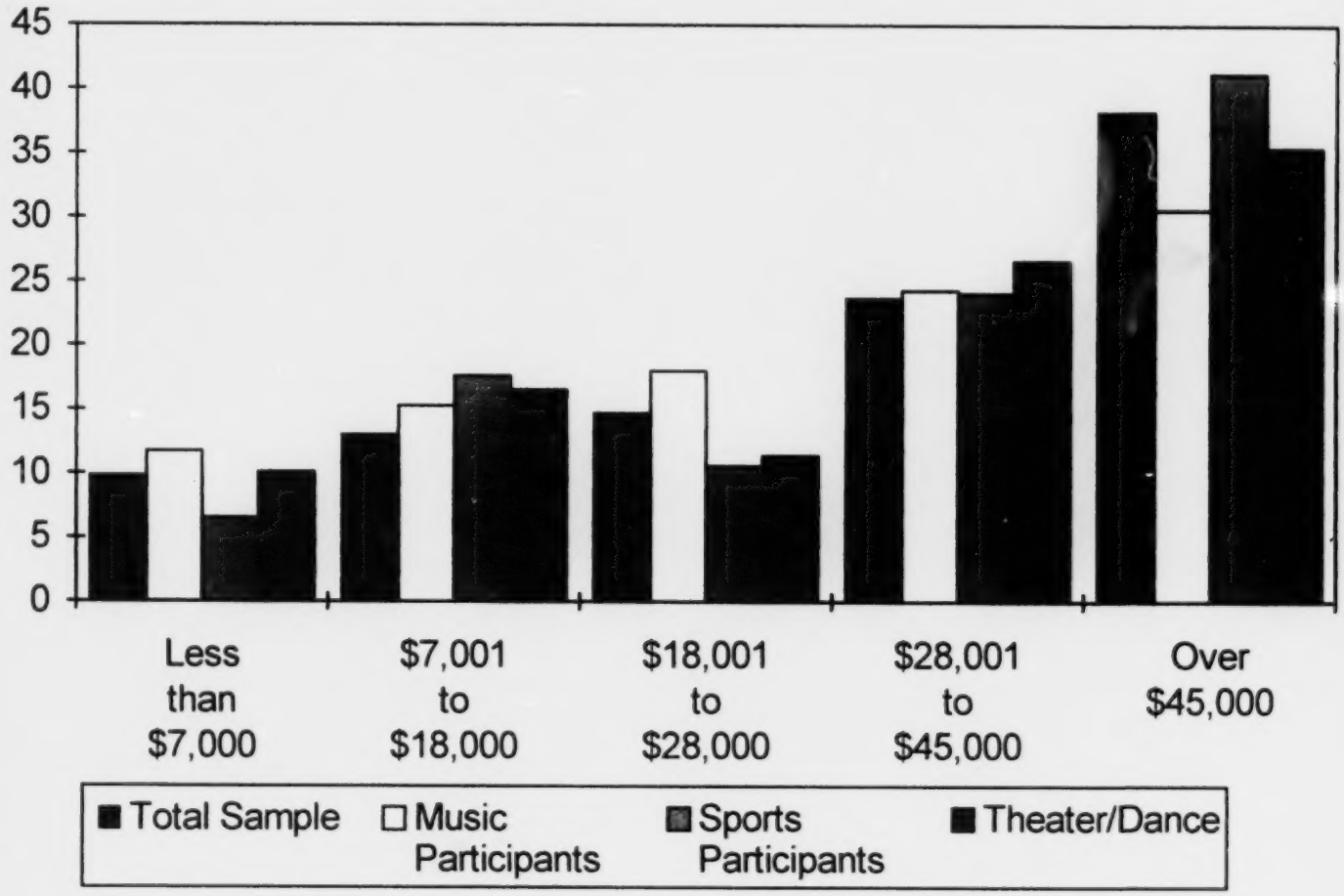

Figure 6: Birth Order of Total Sample

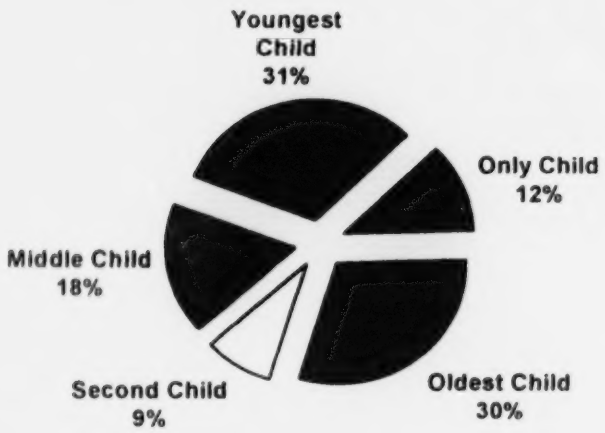

Figure 7 : Family Structure

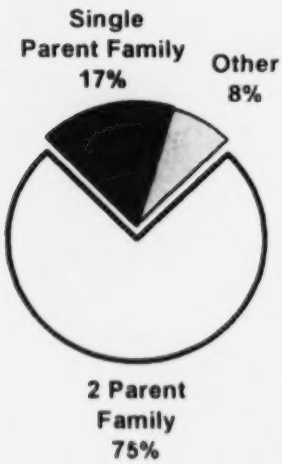

Figure 8: Comparison of High School and Current College GPA's of 3.0 or Better with Total Sample, Sport, Music, and Theater/Dance Participants. (Black = Highschool, Gray = College)

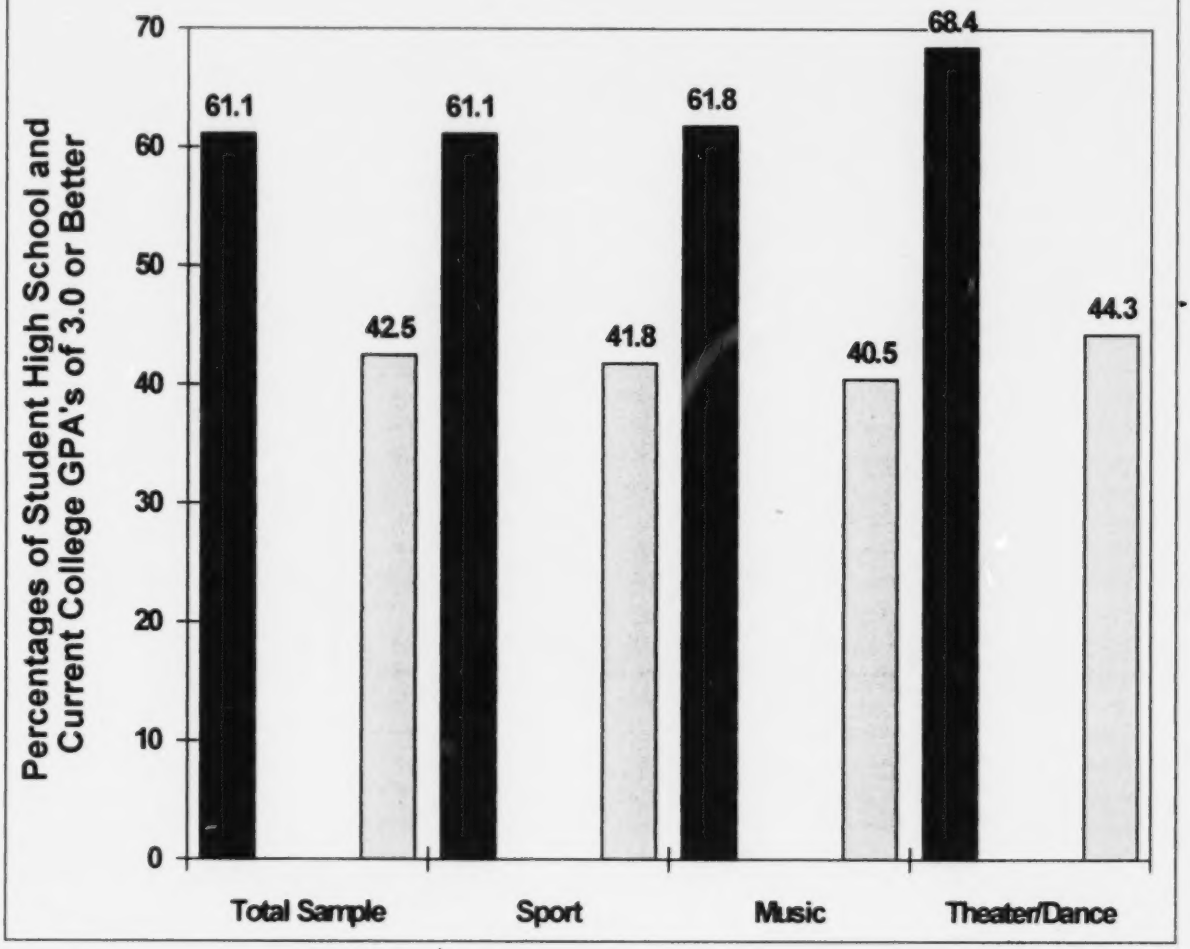

Figure 9: Comparison of Percentages of Sport, Music, and Theater/Dance Students Receiving Special Recognition.

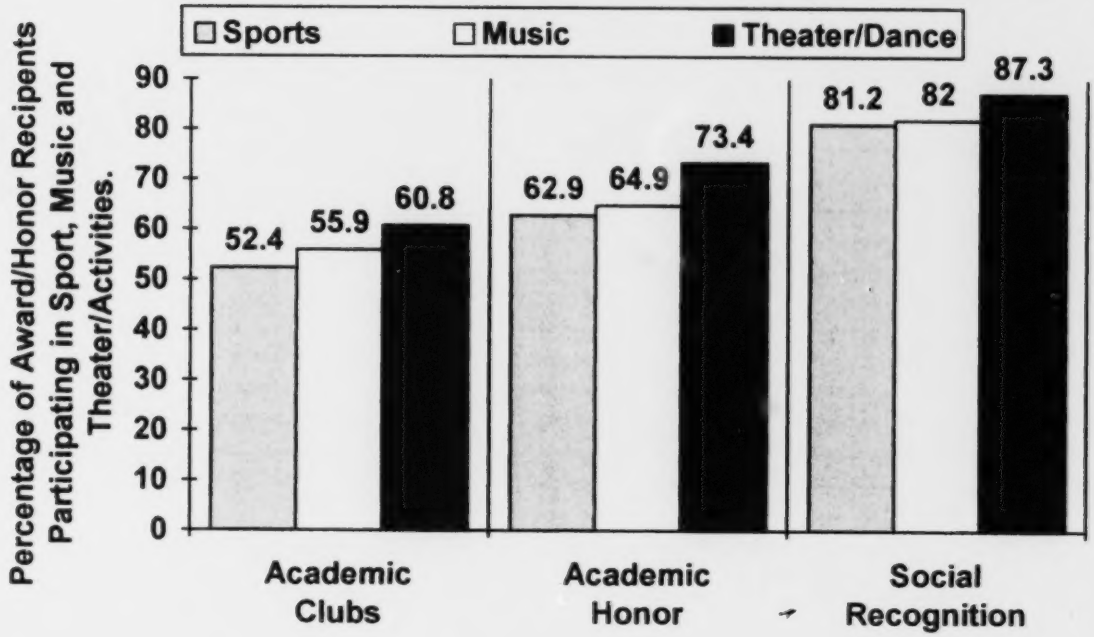

Figure 10: Comparison of Sports, Music, and Theater/Dance Participants with Total Sample Reporting A's and B's of Selected Subjects.